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THE GARDEN CALENDAR

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★ OCT 13 1931 ★

A radio talk by W. R. Beattie, Bureau of Plant Industry, delivered through station WRC and 43 other associate NBC radio stations, in the National Farm and Home Hour, Tuesday, September 22, 1931.

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On our dinner table last Sunday we had fried chicken and gravy, Lima beans, sweet corn on the cob, boiled rice, sliced tomatoes and lettuce, all but the rice produced on our own place. An inventory of our garden this morning shows that we have a supply of carrots, beets, radishes, celery, parsley, onions, snap beans, peppers, sweet potatoes, okra, cabbage, turnips, broccoli, turnips and spinach in addition to the vegetables we had last Sunday. Last night I chanced to go down cellar and in our fruit and vegetable storage room I counted in the neighborhood of three hundred cans and glass jars of canned fruits and vegetables and this has not been an extra good season with us for the canning of vegetables although we have had an abundance of fruit. Tomorrow we plan to can sweet corn on the shares for a neighbor who lives on a farm and who has an excellent patch of late sweet corn.

I am not bragging on our accomplishments in the production and preservation of foods for home use but am simply using our own case as a concrete illustration of what can be done by a little effort. We keep a small flock of chickens but do not keep a cow or pigs as we do not have the room for them besides we live in a restricted community. I had a man tell me the other day that he had enough feed going to waste on his place to feed at least one and possibly two cows. This man formerly kept a cow to supply the milk for his family but like many others decided that it was too much trouble. He does, however, have a wonderful garden and grows all of the fruits and vegetables that his family can use.

Now folks, it is getting along to the time of the year when most of us should be thinking seriously about how we are going to store the fruits and vegetables now on our places for winter use. I was on a farm in nearby Maryland last Sunday and the farmer told me that they have had cantaloupes on their breakfast table for over six weeks and the melons came from the home patch. I remarked about the great quantities of tomatoes in his garden and the Lima beans and the squashes, sweet potatoes and a dozen other vegetables. The trees in his young apple orchard are bending to the ground with fine fruit and his pear trees are fairly well loaded.

This condition prevails today on thousands of farms, north, south, east and west, and the problem is to store or preserve plenty for winter use. In many communities there is a cooperative movement on foot to can and store an extra supply for use in caring for hungry and needy families this winter.

Now the method of storage will depend largely upon where you are located, and it is largely a matter of temperature control and ventilation. The problem usually is to get the heated air out of the storage room and replace it with cooled air. First of all a suitable storage must be provided. In the entire northern part of the country a room partitioned off in a cool corner of the cellar where it can

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be ventilated will serve the purpose. In some cases it will pay to construct a concrete, stone or brick storage cellar or pit put-of-doors, partially or wholly underground and with provision for ventilation, drainage and in some cases a little heating during extremely cold weather.

In this connection I would like to refer you to Farmer's Bulletin No. 879 on the Home Storage of Vegetables. This bulletin describes and illustrates the various types of storage cellar or pit adapted to the various parts of the country. I am informed that a new edition of about 40,000 of this bulletin has just been printed to meet the demand for information relative to storage this fall.

Those of you who live in the south should make provision for the storage of your sweet potatoes. If you have just a few bushels to store you can doubtless keep them in some room of the house, perhaps above the kitchen but if you have many to store I would advise you to fit up a room or a house where the potatoes can be cured at a temperature of about 85 degrees with ventilation then after they are cured lower the temperature to about 55 degrees, or as near that temperature as possible. For white potatoes it has been found best to keep them at a temperature of 55 or 60 degrees for a short time after digging so that the bruises will heal then get the temperature below 50 degrees for keeping them. Too low a temperature, that is down around 35 or 38 degrees will cause the potatoes to loose quality.

I couldn't begin to go into all the details of the best methods of storing fruits and vegetables in the few minutes allotted me for the Garden Calendar but I will be glad to send you a copy of Farmer's Bulletin No. 879. The main point is that all of us should prevent anything in the way of good food going to waste by storing or otherwise preserving it for winter use. Somebody will need it before spring if we do not.

Next week at this time we expect to present another meeting of the Progressive Garden Club, the subject being "Nuts for Home Use." We hope you will be on hand to crack a few nuts with us.